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THE TRANSVAAL.

The Transvaal is singular, even in the most unhistoric regions of South Africa, from having no authentic history beyond the memory of men now living; it has nevertheless, during such brief period, passed through more revolutions than many ancient states during their whole existence, involving four almost complete changes of ruling races, Bechuanas, Zulus, Dutch, and English.

Men now alive can remember when the greater part of the Transvaal was thickly peopled by Bechuanas, a nation far in advance of their Kaffir and Zulu brethren of the great Bantu family, as regards all the arts of life. Fifty years ago the Bechuanas had been so harassed by Zulu invasions, especially by the great inroad of Moselekatze, that those who escaped massacre had fled towards the Kalahari Desert to Secocoeni's country and to Basutoland. English sportsmen, in 1836, saw elephants, rhinoceroses, and giraffes in the fertile valleys among the recent ruins of populous Bechuana villages where now stand Pretoria and Potchefstrom. They visited the camp of Moselekatze, the Zulu chief, 'the Attila of South Africa' as he was called, the cause of the more recent devastation, just as he was encountering the 'Vortrekkers,' the leaders of the great Boer emigration, who, after many reverses and much severe fighting, finally drove him to the north-east, where he died, leaving his son to rule over his people, the Matabele (Zulus), who had finally settled in the land where they now dwell, 600 miles north of Zululand.

The tendency of the Dutch Boers in the Cape Colony to emigrate beyond the colonial boundary appears to date from the earliest years of Dutch settlement. There are on the statute book of the Dutch governors various regulations which aimed at repressing this tendency. Some of the colonists, after settling for years on what was then the frontier of the colony, were in the habit of seeking, in the then unexplored regions beyond the colonial boundary, a land of less administrative restraint on their wanderings. Efforts were made to restrain this tendency, by legal penalties; but nevertheless a steady emigration of the more enterprising inhabitants of the colony had been going on for generations when it received a sudden fresh impulse from the emancipation of the slaves in the old colony. Little discretion

or consideration for the feelings or interests of the Dutch masters was shown in giving effect to the English Emancipation Act. In a great majority of instances the slaves of the Dutch farmer at the Cape had been better treated than in most of our other colonies, and a strong sense of injustice and unnecessary harshness towards the masters was, in the case of the wealthier and more respectable families, frequently added to the inevitable pecuniary loss caused by restrictions on the supply of labour to which they had been accustomed. Hence, when the cry went forth among the Dutch farmers that 'they must seek a home beyond the British boundary where they would be free from the interference of the humanitarian English Government,' the crowd of 'Trekkers,' or emigrants, was swelled by many families of comparative wealth and respectability, who left what had been their homes for many generations in the best parts of the old Cape Colony, hoping to find freedom from interference beyond the Orange River. They were by descent men of a proud and determined race—Dutchmen and French Huguenots, whose ancestors had left their homes in Europe rather than submit to religious tyranny. They had been within comparatively recent times subjected to English rule, and their own religious fanaticism often added to the inevitable irritation of their position, as an incentive to found a new and more free territory beyond the English boundary. Some made their way, in 1835–38, by a direct route to the Transvaal; but others travelled beyond the sources of the Orange River, and finally descended into Natal, which, after the cold and exposed uplands on the other side of the mountains, seemed to them a veritable land of promise.

Natal had then been almost emptied of its inhabitants by successive visitations from Zulu 'impis.' In many parts the scattered native inhabitants had been reduced to such straits that cannibalism was rife among them, and thrilling stories may yet be heard, from old people in Natal, as well as in Basutoland, of the cannibalism of which they had themselves been the threatened victims and, in some instances, the partakers. Here, as elsewhere in South Africa, the depopulation was quickly followed by an increase of beasts of the forest, and most of the old inhabitants of Natal can tell of herds of elephants they had themselves seen; one of the surest proofs of the general depopulation of the country.

Dingaan, the Zulu chief, appears at first to have been, like his predecessor Chaka, well inclined to the white men who visited him, and to have thought that he might turn their firearms to his own advantage. In reply to an application from Piet Retief and others of the Boer leaders for land to settle on, he set them a task to recover some cattle which had been carried off from his people by a neighbouring chief. This task was duly performed, and as a reward

he ceded to the Boers a large tract of territory, for the most part void of human beings, and now forming the best districts of the Colony of Natal. But the speed and accuracy with which they had performed a difficult service seem to have aroused Dingaan's jealous fears of what these white men might hereafter do, and the ink was literally barely dry on the document by which he ceded to them the territory they asked for, when he invited the Boer deputation to a parting feast, and had them all massacred on the spot, sending out 'impis' in various directions to surprise and destroy their families wherever they were found encamped. The memorable story of this massacre of Piet Retief and his gallant band of followers, and the subsequent massacres of Boer families on the 'Bloody Sunday,' in 1838, will ever be the starting-point of Boer history, and the foundation, in Boer estimation, of their claims to whatever land they have since conquered from the Zulus and other native tribes.

But the Boers in Natal found a more formidable obstacle than Dingaan in the constitutional claims of the English Government at the Cape. By that Government the Boers were looked on as runaway subjects, and as having broken the colonial laws by emigrating from the colony and setting up a rival dominion in Natal, where a few English settlers had previously obtained grants from the Zulu chiefs Chaka and his successor Dingaan. Hostilities between the Boers and the English Government ensued, which, as in most cases of the kind, may be narrated from two points of view, according as the narrator is a Dutchman or an Englishman. But the result was that the territory of Natal was taken over by the British Government, and finally erected into a separate colony, in 1844, whilst those Boers who were not content to remain under the new dominion trekked to fresh homes in the Transvaal and Orange Free State territory.

The pages of Livingstone's earlier travels show how the Boers, when they settled in the Transvaal, encroached on their weaker native neighbours.

All these things, be it remembered, are matters of living memory. Some of the men who are now leading the Boer malcontents can remember their original home in the Cape Colony. Many more have heard of those homes from their parents, and most can tell of their weary wanderings for thousands of miles, of their descent into the rich valleys of Natal, of the Zulu massacres of their friends and families, of the strict operation of English law, and of their own final settlement in lands of which the wild beasts of the field were then the actual possessors, and which, as they believe, they rendered their own by building civilised habitations, and substituting flocks and herds for the elephant and the antelope.

It is well to take note of these things in judging of the present feeling of the Boers towards us, as well as towards the natives; and to

remember that the Boers believe they held the Transvaal by the same right by which we hold Canada, India, and many other possessions—the right of conquest.

We must now glance at the different fortunes of the two Dutch Republics founded by the emigrant Boers beyond the Orange River.

The practical independence of the Boers of the Transvaal was from the first assured to them by what is called the Sand River Convention (in 1852), by which their independence was recognised on conditions mainly directed to prevent their enslaving the native tribes in their neighbourhood. But the Orange Free State was at first retained as British territory, and was after some years, in 1854, cast off by the British Government, greatly in opposition to the expressed wish of a large number of its inhabitants, and formed into a separate republic.

Compressed within Natal, Basutoland, and the old Cape Colony on the south, and by the Transvaal Republic on the east and north, the Orange Free State has been restrained within definite limits, and its present development has been thereby greatly promoted. The value of this compression was not at first recognised by the Orange Free State, and its people have not yet forgotten the grievance of the English Government accepting the submission of the Basutos, and declaring Basutoland British territory, just as its ruler was on the eve of surrendering to the Free State.

After this, in one direction only was expansion possible, towards the west, and there the discovery of diamond fields, in a territory to which the right of the Orange Free State was disputed, again brought them in collision with the English Government. The Diamond Fields were annexed to the British territory under circumstances which, however defensible, caused to the Government and people of the Orange Free State intense dissatisfaction, which was not entirely removed by the parliamentary grant of a large sum of money as compensation. There can be no doubt that the neighbourhood of the English colonies has greatly assisted in the development of the Orange Free State, but the steady progress of that republic is more especially due to the statesman who has for many years filled the office of President. Mr. Brand entered public life at Cape Town as son of one of the leading citizens, Sir Christofel Brand, who enjoyed the respect and esteem of all his fellow-colonists as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Brand had been called to the English bar, and had practised with great success in his native colony, when he was elected for the first time President of the Orange Free State. He has since been twice re-elected; and his wisdom and firmness, his statesmanlike foresight and sound patriotism, will never be forgotten as long as the name of the Orange Free State has a place in history.

Very different has been the fortune of the sister South African Republic in the Transvaal. It was some time before anything like a central government was established. The emigrant Boers, while they were still moving, had been in the habit of convening separate Volksraads, or assemblies of the people, as occasion required, at each large camp; and for some time after they settled down, though on great occasions the whole body of the Boers were summoned to meet, there were practically three republics, making more or less claim to separate and independent existence and power of legislation. Wakkerstrom, and subsequently Lydenberg, at first appeared likely to be seats of government for one republic; but Rustenberg, on the opposite western frontier, was a nearer and more convenient capital for those who settled in that part of the country. Potchefstrom, in a good commercial position, ultimately became the central capital, till the government was moved to Pretoria.

But the selection of a capital did little to remove the inherent difficulties of governing so vast and so sparsely inhabited a region as the Transvaal. The compression from neighbouring states, which acted so beneficially in the case of the Orange Free State, did not exist in the Transvaal. Around the whole circuit of frontier, with the exception of the Natal and Orange Free State boundaries in the south, were tribes who invited Boer expansion. The sons of the Vortrekkers, throughout a great part of the Transvaal, were under no obligation, like their brethren in the Orange Free State, to submit to the ruling of a central government; they could move further afield into the wilderness whenever the central government affronted them; and hence arose a process of disintegration and disinclination to obey any central authority, which has been the real proximate cause of most of the subsequent difficulties in the Transvaal. Volksraads were convened with due formality, and passed numerous laws; but, practically, it was found impossible to get the law obeyed, unless obedience happened to suit the views of individual Boers. I have been assured that it was no unusual sight for large bodies of Boers, armed and mounted, to threaten a visit to the legislature to compel it to rescind obnoxious laws; and even while the law remained on the statute book, obedience was often refused by armed bodies sufficiently strong to render it impossible for the executive to compel obedience: malcontents who did not wish to remain and resist had always the option of seeking, by a fresh 'trek,' countries where obedience to any law would be unnecessary.

The spirit thus engendered led, as far back as twelve years ago, to a great emigration across the Kalahari Desert into Damaraland. Some were discontented with their government; others were instigated simply by the desire to find a better land, or by love of enterprise. Moving in bodies of from sixty to a hundred wagons,

they speedily exhausted the scanty supplies of water on their march; their route was often badly selected, and almost every company of emigrants suffered terrible hardship from fever and thirst, from loss of companions, cattle and wagons, before they reached the healthy regions on the west of the desert.

This disastrous emigration preceded the annexation of the Transvaal by the English. It was, to a great extent, caused by the dissatisfaction of the Boers with the then Republican Government of the Transvaal, and the early history of those who undertook and suffered in the emigration supplies a sufficient answer to much that is now alleged against the conduct of the English Government in 1877. It would be well if those who now criticise the Act of Annexation would make themselves better acquainted with the history of the Transvaal Boers during the eight or ten years which preceded it; but space does not now admit of more than a brief allusion to some of the prominent facts.

After the first Boer settlements on the north and west of the Transvaal, a very few years sufficed to bring about a reaction on the part of the native tribes; who, instead of giving way as they had at first done to the intrusion of white settlers, began to press back into their old stations, and to resume the practical sovereignty of districts from which they had been expelled by the Boers—or, earlier still, by Moselekatze's Zulus. Sometimes the Boers were altogether driven out from their first settlements; sometimes they were allowed to remain on payment of tribute to some native chief; but over a large extent of country from the Waterberg round to the Zulu border, the Boer population was steadily being driven back and subjected to the supremacy of native rulers.

It was on the Zulu border that danger of a serious native invasion in force was most threatening; but on the opposite side, on the western frontier of the Transvaal, disputes with native tribes had already brought the Transvaal administration into controversy with the English in the tract now known as the 'Keate Award.'

Between the Potchefstrom District, the border of which was the original frontier of the Transvaal, and the British territory in Griqualand West, is a large and fertile district, occupying the whole space between the Vaal and Hart rivers. This territory had been waste and almost uninhabited previous to 1838, but since that time had been partially occupied by Koranna, Bechuana, and Griqua clans, interspersed with Boer settlers. As the number of inhabitants increased, dissensions arose between the native tribes and the Government of the Transvaal regarding the true Transvaal boundary, and the question was referred for arbitration to Mr. Keate, then Lieutenant-Governor of Natal. He passed an award which assigned the greater part of the disputed territory to the native tribes. Mr. Martinus

Pretorius, the son of the famous Vortrekker, was the President of the Transvaal Republic, and it was understood that personally he felt bound to comply with the award which had been passed by Lieutenant-Governor Keate, but permission to do so was refused by the Transvaal Volksraad, and this was said to have been the proximate cause of Mr. Pretorius' resignation of the office of President. The subsequent interregnum, and the weakness of the Transvaal Government, prevented the English Government from adopting the obvious course of insisting on the validity of the award, and requiring that it should be carried out. After a period of much confusion and prolonged intrigue, the interregnum terminated by Mr. Burgers accepting the office of President of the Transvaal, which he continued to hold until the annexation in 1877.

Mr. Burgers belonged to one of the oldest and most respected Dutch families in the Cape Colony. He had been educated for the ministry in the Dutch Reformed Church, and was a man of much natural talent and of considerable reading and accomplishment. But, in the course of his studies at a European university, he had imbibed a good many of the modern German rationalistic views, which were entirely at variance with the Calvinistic tenets of the Dutch Reformed Church. This had not at all lessened his influence with that small but active section of his Dutch countrymen who are locally known as 'Liberaals,' or free-thinkers, in politics and in religion, while his natural eloquence gave him great popularity among his countrymen, who are passionately fond of rhetorical oratory. When Mr. Pretorius resigned the Presidency, there was great difficulty in finding any suitable candidate who was likely to command the suffrages of any large section of the Transvaal republicans, and the eyes of the intelligent and progressive 'Liberaal' party were turned to the eloquent young divine, whose bold defence of his heterodox views had already made him the talk of every Presbytery in the old colony. Mr. Burgers accepted the invitation, gave up theology, and became President. He lost no time in devoting himself ardently to the cause of progress in various branches of the administration, but a lack of experience rendered some of his best-devised schemes of improvement abortive, and finally brought his administration, and the country over which he ruled, to ruin. He had magnificent designs for popular education, for reforming the finances and establishing a gold coinage, for judicial reform and the foundation of good courts of justice, for developing the resources of the Transvaal and improving its communications with the outer world, but his plans were, for the most part, above the comprehension of even the more intelligent Boers, and quite beyond the financial power of the Republic to execute. Mr. Burgers visited Europe; but little practical benefit

for the Transvaal followed. Even the railway from Delagoa Bay, which, if carried out, would have been of inestimable value to the Transvaal, got no further than the raising of a loan in Amsterdam, large enough seriously to embarrass the finances of the Transvaal, but quite insufficient to execute even a section of the railway.

These results were patent to all the world, but there were besides rumours of advances made by Mr. Burgers to obtain alliances with more than one European power. German politicians and mercantile men thought seriously of obtaining a footing in the Transvaal, and there establishing a more effectual counterpoise to English commercial and political supremacy in South Africa. These plans were, however, not encouraged by the German Government, and Mr. Burgers returned to the Transvaal strengthened with little more than sympathy, and a few men of education and ability, chiefly Germans and Hollanders, whom he persuaded to accompany him to the land of promise.

But, though these foreign auxiliaries would materially have improved Mr. Burgers' power of administration in the Transvaal, they by no means advanced his popularity. They were often supercilious and unpopular with the old-fashioned Boers; more than this, most of the new-comers were 'Liberaals,' and were regarded with jealousy by the orthodox members of the Dutch Reformed Church, and still more so by the Dopper sect, which formed a large portion of the most persevering and industrious of the Boer agricultural community.

Among the most prominent of Mr. Burgers' difficulties was the necessity for enforcing the authority of the South African republic over the Basuto chief Secocoeni. This chief had rallied around him, in the strong country near the Gold Fields, the remnants of the Bechuana tribes who had been driven by Zulus from the open country of the Transvaal. Owing partly to the natural difficulties of attacking his position, and partly to the want of perseverance and defection of the Boers, Mr. Burgers' expedition to bring Secocoeni to obedience was, to a great extent, an expensive failure, and proved the immediate cause of the ruin of his administration.

This brings us to the period when Sir Theophilus Shepstone, in 1877, visited the Transvaal as Special Commissioner from the English Government. It is not necessary to recapitulate the instructions he carried with him, nor the history of his visit, as they are to be found in Blue Books.

In judging of the annexation of the Transvaal I would wish it to be borne in mind that it was an act which in no way originated with me, over which I had no control, and with which I was only subsequently incidentally connected. The annexation took place on the 11th of April; several days before my arrival at the Cape on the 31st

of March could be known to Sir Theophilus Shepstone, as the telegraph line did not then exist, and letters took over three weeks from Cape Town to Pretoria. I say this from no wish to lessen my own responsibility for anything connected with the Transvaal, but simply as a reason why my opinions on the subject may be taken as those of an impartial observer.

It was a great question then, as now, whether the annexation was justifiable. Let us examine this question as it affected, first the interest, wishes, and obligations of the Boers. Let us consider the Boers, in the most favourable light, as an independent people, who had achieved and wished to retain their national independence.

There can be no doubt that there was, at the time Sir Theophilus Shepstone visited the Transvaal, practically, anarchy and paralysis of all governing power in the administration. Mr. Burgers had no authority sufficient to enforce the laws, to realise the legal taxes, or to protect life or property. Nothing could exceed the desperate condition of the finances. There was absolutely no money in the treasury for any purposes of government, to pay salaries or even postal contracts. The paper currency of the Republic was so depreciated as to be rarely current, and barter was the general form of commerce where English money was not procurable. The Volksraad turned a deaf ear to Mr. Burgers' passionate appeals that they would save the State by simply paying the taxes they had themselves imposed, and obeying the laws they had themselves passed. The appeal was all in vain. When Mr. Pretorius resigned, no Boer could be brought forward to accept the Presidentship. The enterprising young Cape colonist who had attempted the task was compelled to confess his failure, and to give up the attempt; and when Mr. Burgers threw down the reins there was no one present who offered to pick them up save Sir Theophilus Shepstone, the English Commissioner. These facts have never been denied, and they cannot now be gainsaid. All that the Boers and their friends can even now say is, that if they had been left to themselves they would have 'pulled through,' and could have organised their State as well as the Orange Free State; but no one believed that this was possible in 1877, and no reasonable man who knows the facts really believes so now. Let those who doubt the accuracy of this picture consult the file of the *Volkstem*, the dutch journal of Pretoria, for February and March 1877, and they will there find in the reports of the proceedings in the Volksraad, and especially in Mr. Burgers' speeches, abundant evidence of the fatal paralysis of governing power, and the wilful abstention of the Boers from the only measures which could make self-government any longer possible.

The circumstances of the Orange Free State were, as has been already explained, quite different from those of the Transvaal.

None of the advantages which Mr. Brand found ready to his hand, and which made his arduous task a possible one in the Orange Free State, were to be found in the Transvaal. As regarded native enemies, especially, hedged in by the British and Transvaal territory, the Orange Free State had no 'native question.' But in the Transvaal the gradually widening and weakening circle of Boer 'trekking' had reached its limit, and had for some years encountered an unyielding circle of fierce and organised savage nations, which the isolated efforts of Boer 'commandos' were quite unable to drive back. To the north, to the east, and to the south, the Boers had distinctly failed, and were giving ground before the native tribes. Intelligent and patriotic Boers saw that they had no longer power to drive back the native races. It was one thing to direct the concentrated energies of the whole of the Vortrekkers' hardy emigrants, trained in habits of perpetual warfare, and it was quite another thing to attempt, by the authority of the government at Pretoria, to summon burghers from their settled homes 400 miles off, to fight Secocoeni with the assistance of a few mercenary foreign auxiliaries, whilst the Zulus, the Basutos, and the Matabele were looking on, prepared to join in the battle against the white men whenever a favourable opportunity might offer.

Sir Theophilus Shepstone had special and definite certain knowledge of the intentions of the most formidable race, the Zulus, which left no doubt as to the designs of their ruler on the Transvaal. He had again and again heard from Cetywayo himself, and from his most trusted messengers, earnest appeals that the British Government would not oppose his 'washing his spears' in the blood of his neighbours; that we would allow him to drive the Boers out of the disputed territory which Cetywayo had himself assigned to them; and that he was quite able and eager to sweep them all away for three hundred miles up to Pretoria, which he claimed as his by right of Chaka's and Moselekatze's conquests.

Whatever we may persuade ourselves as to his feeling towards Natal, there can be no doubt of his desire and ability to have exterminated the Boers, could he but have assured our neutrality. Knowing this, as certainly as man can know anything regarding the intentions of another, Sir Theophilus Shepstone was bound to state such an important fact to the leading men in the Transvaal. It was subsequently made a grievance that he had so informed them. Yet had he not stated what he so certainly knew, no words would have been strong enough to condemn such cruel reticence.

But, whatever the danger, the Boers, it may be said, did not ask our protection, and we ought to have waited till they did so.

What the Boers individually wished for was individual independence of law and government generally, not of this or that foreign government, but to obey no one by force of law; to be far from the power of compulsion; to see, as they put it, 'no other man's smoke;' to be free and unfettered in the wilds. This was the object of their aspirations. For national life and national independence they had a strong sentiment, but, for national liberty, they were not willing to make any sacrifice of their individual license, or power to refuse obedience to law. The limits within which such freedom was possible had been reached before Mr. Burgers undertook to attempt the task of governing. It is only the general conviction amongst Boers of these truths that can explain their passive acquiescence in the annexation.

But, it has been said, the measure was accepted by the Boers under protest; and the protest, recorded by Mr. Burgers at the time, has been since appealed to as affording colour to the assertion that it was an act of force on the part of the British Government. This theory, however, will not stand the test of examination by the light of unquestionable facts. For many weeks previously Mr. Burgers had held a session of the Volksraad; he had exhausted all his eloquence in earnest appeals to them to save their country, not by any acts of heroic self-devotion, but by simple obedience to the law and payment of their legal taxes; but his eloquence produced no result on the legislature. The republic, in fact, died of atrophy, and its death was certainly in no way accelerated by any action of Sir Theophilus Shepstone, whatever opinion may be held individually as to the time and method of annexation.

What then, it may be asked, was the meaning of Mr. Burgers' formal protest? I am afraid it must be admitted that the protest was nothing more than a dramatic finale to the attempt to govern, prompted by a natural desire to reconcile acquiescence in the measure adopted with the theoretical duty of obedience to the constitution. But, whatever the motive of the protest, it must have been clearly apparent at the time that a verbal protest, however strongly worded, was not the way to stop the annexation. Had the great majority of the Boers really desired to oppose it, nothing would have been easier than to have refused obedience to the proclamation; to have hauled down the British flag which Sir Theophilus Shepstone had hoisted, and to have presented him with his passports, and escorted him to the frontier. There were plenty of men among the Boers, and advising them, who were well aware that all this might have been done in a manner which could not possibly have given the English Government any just umbrage. Had they been willing to make the slightest sacrifice in order to secure their own independence, nothing further was necessary than to elect in Mr. Burgers' place a President who

would undertake the government, and, by paying their taxes, to give him the means of governing. But no such man was to be found at the time, and the Boers as a body acquiesced in the annexation as an inevitable necessity.

Again, whatever objection may be stated to the annexation on other grounds, the position of the natives, both in the Transvaal itself and its borders, has certainly been greatly improved, and yet further progressive improvement has been secured by coming under the British flag.

But the question remains, Have not we, the people of England, any right to complain of the additional burdens imposed upon ourselves?

I think not. It was obviously incompatible with the safety of the English colonies, to allow a state of anarchy and lawlessness to exist in so near a neighbour. We know now what were the aspirations of the Zulus and other native tribes regarding the Transvaal, and what they could, and said they would, do if the English Government in Natal would but stand aside and leave them undisturbed to settle with the Boers. Any one who reads what the Zulus did without firearms when the Boers were united, and what the Zulus have since shown they could do, organised and armed as they were under Cetywayo, may judge what would have been the results to Natal and to European rule generally in South Africa had the Zulus been assured that we should remain quiescent while they attacked the Boers, as they were only too eager to do.

But there was another danger which was very present to the mind of all who had any hand in the measure, though comparatively little has been said of it in the official justification of the act. There were, as Mr. Burgers and most of his colleagues well knew, other European Powers besides England who might be induced, if England would not, to undertake to aid the Transvaal in maintaining its existence. Mr. Burgers had sought such alliances without much success during his visit to Europe, but there was no reason to suppose that such objections would be maintained if the great Governments of Europe were once assured that England declined the responsibility, and would view with indifference the establishment of any other great Power as protecting Transvaal independence.

The conversion of the Transvaal into an allied colony had been, and is still, a favourite project among many in the German mercantile world, and in Holland among those who look forward to the ultimate absorption of Holland into the Germanic Empire. It is useless to speculate what might have been the result had the German Government been induced to give encouragement to such projects; but assured, as the English Government must have been, that such a result was possible, it would have been suicidal policy, as regards

our colonies in South Africa, to have hesitated to give to the Transvaal, in some form or other, the assistance which she required to maintain her existence when the Transvaal government was in a state of such complete paralysis.

It has been contended that the possession of the Transvaal has inconveniently increased our national responsibilities. The assertion, I think, admits of more than doubt. But even if any increase of responsibility could be proved, the time for limiting our colonial responsibilities by declining to admit new colonies to be founded is long since past. The objection might have been a practical one three centuries ago, before we possessed any colonies; but it is out of date after a colonial history which from the foundation of American and West Indian colonies down to that of Fiji, proves, if it proves anything, that the increase of colonial responsibilities is not incompatible with growth of national power to hold, to rule, and to defend them.

Hence, from whatever point of view the matter is looked at, whether from that of the interest of the Boer population and their wishes at the time, or from the interest of the native populations, or from that of our own position in Africa, I do not see what other course could have been adopted consistent with due regard for our own safety and the real interests of our neighbours, other than annexation of the Transvaal to the British dominions. Whether it might not have been effected in some better way, or at some other period, may, like other speculative problems, remain a question for discussion, but it is for those who can suggest such an alternative to state it. The present question is, Was it possible to leave the Transvaal to drift further into anarchy, or fall a prey to its native neighbours? If not, in what other way could the absolutely necessary result of establishing some settled European government have been brought about?

The members of the Volksraad had hardly dispersed to their homes after the proclamation of the annexation when it was discovered that the new *régime* would interfere with the position of many men, chiefly educated foreigners and strangers, who had previously profited by the state of anarchy, and they had little difficulty in working on the general feeling of the Boers, and persuading them that the annexation was uncalled for, and likely to be injurious to their interests.

A mass meeting, with elaborate discussions in questions of politics, has a peculiar charm for the Boers, and when they were got together it was not difficult to persuade them that they had been betrayed by their rulers, and might be oppressed by the English officials, to whom they bore but little love.

Messrs. Kruger, Jorissen, and Joubert were commissioned by the

meeting to proceed to Europe with a protest against the annexation. The deputation was variously represented as a formal protest, and as a make-believe exhibition, intended to satisfy the more advanced malcontents that everything had been done to relieve their consciences for acquiescing in annexation. The deputation reached Europe, but extracted little beyond ordinary formal courtesy, and an assurance of the impossibility of revoking the measure. It failed to arouse the sympathies of any Continental Power, and returned without having achieved any result satisfactory to the protesting parties. A second mass meeting and a second deputation followed, in which Messrs. Kruger and Joubert took part, but no different result followed, and the members returning from England reached South Africa just as the Zulu war had broken out and our arms had met with a disastrous check at Isandhlwana.

If, looking at the whole administrative results of the eighteen months then elapsed since the annexation, it be said that there was want of vigour in carrying out necessary reforms and in enforcing the levy of taxes under the old laws, it must be remembered that Lord Carnarvon, who understood as well as an English statesman could, the wants of the Transvaal, had left office, and his loss was a very serious one to the Transvaal. But above all Sir Theophilus Shepstone had met with most unexpected opposition in arranging the disputes between the Transvaal Government and the Zulus.

It is impossible here to go fully into the history of the quarrel between the Zulus and the Transvaal republican Government, which was one of the proximate causes of the Zulu war. Cetywayo, during the lifetime of his father Panda, had purchased from the Boers the persons of two of his fugitive brethren, rival candidates for the succession, who had taken refuge in the Transvaal. A large tract of land was promised to the Boers by Cetywayo as the price of their compliance with his desire. The Boers were permitted to occupy the territory, where they built houses, planted trees, and divided the country into farms. But the transaction was not approved of by Panda, the ruling chief, nor by the Great Council of Zulu chiefs and counsellors, and on this ground the confirmation of the grant was subsequently evaded by Cetywayo when he became sovereign, and had consolidated his own power and imagined himself more than a match for the Boers.

As Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, Sir Theophilus Shepstone had felt more sympathy for the Zulu claims to resume, than he did for the Boer claims to retain, possession of the disputed territory; but when he came to look at the question from the other side, and with the light thrown on it by the documentary and other evidence produced by the Transvaal authorities, he was con-

vinced of the justice of the Transvaal claim. He had always had great personal influence with the Zulus and their ruler. As soon as possible after the annexation he went to that part of the frontier which was the scene of the dispute, in the belief that he might be enabled to come to an arrangement with the Zulus which would satisfy the reasonable claims of both parties. At Sir Theophilus Shepstone's request Cetywayo sent a large deputation of his principal chiefs and counsellors to meet him on the border, and great was the astonishment of the English Administrator and of most of those with him when, instead of finding that his arrival at the scene of conference was regarded in a friendly light, he was met with every demonstration of anger, not unmixed with contempt. Zulu chiefs who had been his obsequious friends while he was Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, spoke to him with undisguised want of respect, and, instead of a disposition to accommodate and compromise, he met nothing but a defiant assertion of Zulu right to the whole country.

The fact was that the Zulu ruler had always been used to regard the Boer Government of the Transvaal and the English Government of Natal as rival, if not hostile, powers, and he was unable to understand or brook the appearance of his old friend and adviser as the ruler of the Transvaal and advocate for Transvaal claims.

At first it appeared as if war were imminent, and more than one experienced observer of Zulu affairs predicted that the Zulu 'impis' would at once take forcible possession of the whole of the disputed territory including portions of two districts which unquestionably belonged of right to the Transvaal. Immediate hostilities were, however, averted by the intervention of the Natal Government. The Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Henry Bulwer, sent to Cetywayo offering his good offices, and proposing to appoint Commissioners with a view to arbitration. The proposal was acceded to. The arbitrators were all Natal officials selected by the Lieutenant-Governor, and proceeded to make inquiry and report on the questions at issue. The Boers produced their evidence, including many documents proving the cession by Cetywayo on behalf of the Zulus, then under his father's rule, of the greater part of the territory claimed by the Boers; but they were unable to prove any formal ratification of this cession by Panda, or by the great council of Zulu chiefs. The Zulus declined to produce any evidence, or to discuss the question of cession. They denied that any cession had been made, and advanced claims which would have embraced a region far beyond the territory in dispute. They, however, limited their present claim to the disputed area, and simply announced that that area their king intended to have.

The Commissioners made a report which, after some references

back for further explanations of its purport, was accepted by the Lieutenant-Governor of Natal, and handed on to me, as High Commissioner, for approval. The Arbitration Commissioners in effect threw out the whole of the evidence, oral as well as documentary, produced for the Transvaal. They did not notice the fact that the grant to the Boers by Cetywayo as the price to be paid for the delivery to him of his two brothers had never been, till quite recently, denied by the Zulus; that it had been a prominent subject in Panda's complaints to the Natal officials of the overbearing conduct of his son and heir, that 'Cetywayo had made the grant without his authority, and might get out of the difficulties in which it had involved him as best he could, for that he—Panda—would not ratify the cession.' The award entirely ignored the private rights which had grown up during long undisturbed possession, it did not notice the obligation which lay on Cetywayo not to retract as supreme chief the grant he had made as virtual regent, and it pronounced, in no qualified terms, for the cession of the whole area in dispute to the Zulus.

After a careful review of the whole case, I was of opinion that, having selected the members of the Commission, the English Government was bound by their decision, which gave the sovereignty of the territory in dispute not to the British Government in the Transvaal but to the Zulu king. It was, however, clear that the private rights which had grown up in good faith while the territory was in the actual possession of the Transvaal Government had not been at all investigated, and I limited the award to the sovereignty of the territory in dispute, reserving the private rights of those who had settled on it during the Transvaal administration. What follows belongs rather to the history of the Zulu War. We have here only to note its bearing on the state of feeling in the Transvaal. It must not be forgotten that the Zulu War was in its immediate origin essentially a Transvaal quarrel. Hitherto it has been generally looked on entirely from a Natal point of view, and our relations with the Zulus were no doubt of even more direct importance to the existence of Natal than to the Transvaal. But the first question at issue was the territory in dispute between Boers and Zulus; and, though Natal might be saved from invasion and destruction by the surrender of the disputed territory, the Boers of all classes and in all parts of the Transvaal were extremely indignant at the result of the arbitration, and few recognised any mitigation of their grievance contained in the reservation of private rights which had accrued under the Transvaal occupation.

During the latter part of the time occupied by the proceedings of the Commission, and the subsequent deliberations of the English officials, Colonel (now Sir Evelyn) Wood had arrived with the

column which served under him in the Kaffir War against Kreli. He had marched through Kaffraria, and was then stationed within the undoubted Transvaal territory not far from the disputed border. The Zulus had sent two expeditions into the lands of Luneburg, a thriving Transvaal settlement of more than twenty german families, slaughtering the natives who did not save themselves by flight, driving off their cattle and children, and threatening to attack the village in which the settlers had entrenched themselves. The arrival of a detachment from Colonel Wood's column saved Luneburg from the execution of these threats. But Colonel Wood rendered an even more essential service by securing the confidence and co-operation of some of the best of the Boer frontier farmers. The name of Piet Uys will ever be associated with the exploits of his gallant chief. Piet Uys was the son of one of the bravest and most respected of the Vortrekkers, who had lost his life with many of his family and friends in the early Zulu war with Dingaan. His son Piet, attended by several stalwart sons and relations, were most efficient auxiliaries to us. Piet himself died a hero's death with many British officers and men at Hlobane, two days before Wood's great victory at Kambula. Such examples of their patriotism and heroic self-devotion as Wood's despatches record should not be forgotten at a time when there is much temptation to judge harshly of all the Transvaal Boers.

I had been informed in 1878 that Her Majesty's Government desired I should, as High Commissioner, visit Natal and the Transvaal. I had pointed out to the Secretary of State that it was impossible the High Commissioner should usefully exercise any superintendence over affairs in that quarter, unless the correspondence between the Lieutenant-Governor of Natal and the Administrator of the Transvaal with the Secretary of State were communicated to the High Commissioner, so as to make him acquainted with at least as much as the Secretary of State could be told of the facts which had occurred in Natal and the Transvaal, and the views which were entertained by the officers administering the government of those colonies. My suggestion had been acceded to, and it is only from that period that I had any direct or effectual connection with the conduct of affairs in Natal or the Transvaal.

One of the first convictions which a perusal of the correspondence conveyed to me was, that hostilities could not long be averted either with the Zulus or the Boers. It was a question with which of the two hostilities were likely first to break out; and it was possible that success against the first to break the peace might prevent any breach of the peace by the other power. This view, however, was not concurred in by the Natal officials. They had a strong conviction that the Zulus would never resort to hostilities

against Natal. They held that the only ground of Zulu hostility was our connection, unfortunate as it appeared to Natal, with the government of the Transvaal; and regarding the Transvaal they knew little, and did not concern themselves much.

Sir Theophilus Shepstone was then about to leave the Transvaal for England, where his presence was required to afford the information needful to enable Her Majesty's Government to draw up a constitution for the Transvaal. He was succeeded by Colonel (now Sir Owen) Lanyon, who had won the confidence of Her Majesty's Government by the energy and ability with which he had administered, under great difficulties, the affairs of the colony of Griqualand West. The Boers had advertised a mass meeting early in 1879 to receive the reports of their delegates, Messrs. Kruger and Joubert, regarding their second mission to England. They had invited Colonel Lanyon and myself as High Commissioner to be present at the meeting, and, on the incongruity of any such proceeding being pointed out to them, they desired that we would visit their camp before it separated, with a view to hear what the committee had to say, and to satisfy ourselves as to the unanimity of the great majority of the Boer population in protesting against the Act of Annexation. I had promised that I would comply with their wishes in this respect, but the check to the British arms at Isandhlwana, and the subsequent suspension of active operations and the perilous state of affairs in Natal and Zululand before the reinforcements sent from England could arrive, detained me longer than I had expected, and it was late in March before I was able to leave Natal for the Transvaal

On my road to the Natal border, through the scenes of Zulu massacres forty years previous, I had ample opportunity of seeing how well-founded were the apprehensions which all the old inhabitants of the country entertained with regard to a Zulu invasion. It was quite obvious that nothing could resist or prevent such an invasion, except the fear of the invading force having its retreat cut off, as it returned incumbered with its spoil. The positions occupied by the three columns, which Lord Chelmsford had organised in Zululand, provided at the moment for such defence; and it was clear to any one going through the country, that but for the presence of those columns in Zululand, a Zulu 'impi' when once across the border might have swept up to the skirts of the Drakensberg without any possibility of effectual resistance outside the few fortified 'laagers.' The reinforcements from England had begun to arrive, and Colonel Wood's victory at Kambula, of which I heard at Newcastle as I passed near his camp at the end of March, was sufficient assurance that the worst part of the Zulu crisis in Natal was past; but it was still unsafe to withdraw any troops from the Zulu frontier, and con-

sequently, though the tone of the malcontent Boers in their camp had been threatening, I determined to proceed thither without escort, trusting to the good faith of their leaders, and their power as well as will, to observe the usages of civilised people.

During the six days' march between the frontier and the Boer camp, I had every day, and almost all day long, ample evidence that whatever kept the Boers together in their camp, agreement as to the wisdom of reversing the Act of Annexation formed no part of the motives of many who were present. Often on my road I was met by men, with few exceptions Boers, desiring to know the purport of the message I was empowered to convey to the Boer camp, and most anxious to ascertain whether a reversal of the Act of Annexation formed any part of my instructions. There could be no mistaking either the object or the sincerity which dictated these interrogatories. In very rare cases was there any evidence of sympathy with the avowed objects of the malcontent Boer leaders. Perhaps the most frequent opinion expressed was an assurance that my visitor did not in the least wish that the annexation should now be annulled. Many said they would rather have remained independent and self-governed, but most confessed that the change was for the better, and ought not now to be undone. In several cases very passionate appeals were made by wives and families to send back their husbands and sons who were, they said, detained in the Boer camp against their will. Several of my informants added that they had come to the Transvaal before the annexation, under the conviction that annexation was inevitable; others had come since the annexation, and were still more urgent in deprecating any surrender of the country by Her Majesty's Government to its former misgovernment.

At most of our halting-places after leaving Pietermaritzburg, we met kind advisers who volunteered suggestions that the visit to the camp would be attended with considerable danger, and that I had much better take one of the other roads into Pretoria. Probably the knowledge that such advice had been given me reached the Boer camp; for early on the morning of my visit I received a letter from the committee, apparently written in ignorance of my approach, and remonstrating with me in no very courteous terms on my having deviated, as they supposed, from my formally expressed intention of meeting them. My appearance was, however, a sufficient answer to their want of confidence, and a few miles before reaching the camp I was met by the committee and a considerable deputation of the leaders.

The limits of a single article do not admit of any detailed description of a very interesting and instructive visit to the Boer camp, which was followed by several interviews with the committee, and with individual leaders of the remonstrant Boers; nor of all

we saw or heard during some anxious days at Pretoria, whilst the violent party in the Boer camp every night threatened an attack 'to turn out the British Government' and the handful of 200 soldiers who held the barracks, and to shoot or expel those who favoured the English dominion, which would have included the greater part of the population of the town. I can only briefly summarise the results.

As regards the number of the Boers assembled, they claimed to have had more than 4,000 men in camp, all armed, and mounted, ready for active service. But a comparison of several careful enumerations by those with me, when the Boers were all assembled, led me to believe that there could not be more than 1,600, or at most 2,000, when we visited the camp. This reduction in the estimate did not make the meeting less formidable to the peace of the Transvaal, but it deducted much from their claim to represent the general desire of the whole population.

As regards the disposition and temper of the meeting, I had, from our observations on our way up, concluded that but a very small proportion of the rural population, and a still smaller proportion of the people of the townships, really concurred with the more violent leaders in desiring to resist or annul the annexation. Many were, we were well assured, present only through intimidation,—others, while they had felt the annexation a grievance, accepted it as an inevitable though disagreeable alternative of the previous anarchy,—leaving only a small, though violent and influential, irreconcilable minority, who would, if they could, have reverted to the republic.

This conclusion was warmly contested by the Boer leaders, but their arguments did not at all convince me after what I had myself seen and heard. It seemed, as far as I could judge, that a great majority of the men I conversed with, even in the Boer camp, would be content to remain under the English Government, provided they were well and wisely governed, and allowed a reasonable share in the future government of the Transvaal. This belief was confirmed by the fact that they were as well aware as we, our means of defence did not admit of successful resistance to a determined attack on Pretoria by one half the men who, at the lowest estimate, were then present, armed and ready for action, in the Boer camp. It was the darkest time of the Zulu war, and most of the Boers were loud in expressing their conviction that, in the Zulus, we had met more than our match. There was not a man who could then be spared to reinforce the Pretoria garrison from Lord Chelmsford's force, the nearest post of which was 200 miles distant, and the Boers believed, even more than their actual power warranted, in their own ability 'to put the whole apparatus of the English Government, and the regular soldiers present to defend it, across the border.'

The avowed object of the leaders in inviting us to visit their camp had been fulfilled. They had exhibited their numbers and had personally expressed to me the determination which kept them together. They had heard from me the most emphatic public assurances of my belief that the Act of Annexation could not and ought not to be reversed. Unless they intended to resist by force, there was no one of the declared objects of their meeting to keep them together.

But the leaders did not find it easy to break up the camp, and pressed for a promise from me that I would support the prayer of a memorial which they drew up as a help to them in dispersing their followers.

This I steadily and distinctly refused to do, and finally the committee said they would be content if I would convey to Her Majesty's Government an accurate report of their wishes as stated by the committee, and of the amount of support given to the memorial by the numbers present in camp.

This being a reasonable request, a verbatim report of the proceedings, taken from a shorthand writer's notes of our conferences, was forwarded home by me, after the report had been revised and accepted as correct by the Boer committee. The committee then gave the word '*huis-to*' (homewards), and before the next morning broke, the late occupants of the camp were streaming in wagons and on horseback along the roads leading in every direction from their late camp.

The full reports of all the meetings between the High Commissioner and the Boers will be found in the Blue Books on South African affairs, C. 2367 and C. 2374, of July 1879.

The Boers having dispersed, and every day bringing accounts of the arrival of fresh reinforcements at Natal, Colonel Lanyon (the Administrator) had arranged to accompany the High Commissioner, *viâ* Potchefstrom and the Keate Award, to the Diamond Fields; but at Potchefstrom we received despatches which rendered it desirable that Colonel Lanyon should return to the Natal frontier to give what assistance he could to collect a body of mounted Boers for Colonel Wood's column, and to prepare for operations against Secocoeni. Before leaving, however, we had arranged the measures which we agreed to recommend to Her Majesty's Government for the future government of the Transvaal. These embraced—

1. The creation of an Executive Council, in which some of the Boers should have a part as salaried members.

2. The creation of a temporary Legislature, capable of passing laws immediately necessary to strengthen the administration, and to prepare the way for a representative Volksraad or House of Assembly.

3. More efficient organisation and better payment to the High Court of Justice.

4. Some improvement in the position of the worst-paid officials.

5. A careful scientific examination of the line of the Delagoa Bay Railway.

6. Administrative reforms which were much needed, and included the provision of an efficient police force.

7. The finances were to be made the special charge of a financial commissioner, with a view to equalise revenue and expenditure.

8. As regarded representative institutions for the Transvaal, a great mass of materials had been collected, including opinions from the ministry at the Cape, from the Chief Justice of the Cape, and more especially from Mr. Brand, the popular President of the Orange Free State, who most generously gave all the aid, which his experience enabled him to afford, regarding the changes which he thought might suit the wants of the Transvaal. These materials were forwarded to Her Majesty's Government, and it was my intention, as soon as the views of the Home Government had been expressed, to have convened a conference at which the Transvaal remonstrant party would have been adequately represented, with a view to draw up such a constitution as might satisfy the reasonable desires of the Transvaal people for representative institutions. Mr. Pretorius had intimated his willingness to consider with his colleagues on the commission any proposal that he should assist as a member of the Executive. Hopes were entertained that Mr. Kruger might be willing to take a similar part in the measures which must precede the enactment of a representative constitution. But a few days after the news of the final dispersion of the Boers' camp had been confirmed, a telegram arrived from England, bringing intelligence of the Despatch of Censure on myself of the 19th of March. Two months later I was superseded as High Commissioner by Sir Garnet Wolseley, and from that time I ceased to have any share in the government of the Transvaal.

What has since been done there I can only, like the rest of the world, gather from despatches published in Blue Books.

When a conference to consider the subject of confederation was proposed in the Cape Parliament in its last session, Messrs. Kruger and Jorissen visited the Cape Colony and made a tour through the country districts, detailing the grievances of the Boers in the Transvaal and urging their brethren in the Cape colony to abstain from any movement with a view to confederation till independence had been given back to the Transvaal. Their eloquence made a sufficient impression on the constituencies to ensure opposition to the Government proposals. In this campaign the Boer delegates received

very effectual support from the opposition to ministers in the Cape Legislature and from the small body of Dutch republicans. Free use was made of the sympathetic utterances of prominent politicians in England, and letters from them to members of the Boer committee and of the local colonial opposition were quoted as proving that they would favourably consider the wish of the remonstrants to have the annexation annulled and the South African republic restored.

Since that time there has been a visible and gradual increase of expressed dissatisfaction with the existing government in the Transvaal, recently culminating in acts of violence and rebellion.

But enough has been ascertained to show pretty clearly the real causes of the recent outbreak. There has been nothing to aggravate any real grounds of discontent which existed when I met the Boers in April 1879. In many respects the action of the Transvaal administration has been such as to deserve and obtain popular support, and many advantages have already been secured to the inhabitants of the Transvaal by the English. Among them protection from the encroachment of native tribes, one of the first benefits to be gained by coming under the British flag, has, there can be no doubt, been established.

Financial reform, another great necessity, has been effected. Mr. Sergeaunt's report upon the finances (which he was expressly sent out to draw up) showed clearly the miserable state of disorder and bankruptcy into which they had fallen during the republic. To meet the more pressing needs of the administration, the Imperial Treasury arranged for a loan of 100,000*l*. The annual revenue has been increased from 70,000*l*. to 160,000*l*., notwithstanding the abolition of obnoxious taxes; the increase being mainly due to better administration under Mr. Steele, the financial commissioner, and more honest collection.

Again, some progress, though not so much as could be desired, has been made in administrative reform; and all salaries are punctually paid.

Lastly, any ground for reasonable discontent on the non-use of the Dutch language in all matters of public business in time past, has now been remedied.

What, then, has instigated the Boers to choose the present moment for a rising, when they have been fairly well governed and effectually protected for three and a half years, have had some grievances redressed, and have ground to hope that every reasonable and possible reform would be carried out?

There can be little doubt, I think, that the present outbreak is due to external advice prompted by the embarrassments of the English

[1] See South African Blue Book, C. 2367, p. 87.

Government in the United Kingdom. When I met the Boer Committee, in April 1879, I saw reason to address them regarding some of their advisers—adventurers in the Transvaal of various races—broken men of the classes who in every country form the active agents of rebellion and revolution.

Since then, the same adventurous agitators have been actively at work, stimulating to resistance the Transvaal Boers and their brethren in other parts of South Africa, and urging them to reject all offers of self-government under the British flag, assuring them that they had only to persevere, to obtain unconditional rescission of the annexation. It is much to be feared that unguarded expressions of English politicians have strengthened this agitation. The removal of many troops, especially cavalry, and a knowledge of embarrassments to the English Government nearer home, have certainly been represented as affording an opening that might not easily recur for gaining all demands by force.

Besides British sympathisers and advisers, the Boers have active auxiliaries in Continental Europe. There is naturally a strong fellow-feeling with them among many classes in Holland. In Germany they will have the sympathy of many mercantile men who, on commercial grounds, advocate the establishment of Teutonic colonies as a counterpoise to the preponderating influence of English interests in colonial commerce; and they will have the active support of the ultra-Republican and Socialist parties in all parts of the world, whose main object is the overthrow of all settled and established governments.

The more important question, however, now is, what is to be done for the future?

Let not the English nation suppose that by throwing off all responsibility for the fortunes of the Transvaal we shall either insure the good government of the Transvaal or make our responsibilities in the other colonies of South Africa less. With a Transvaal Republic, which had achieved its independence by open revolt, and had possibly established itself under the protection of some foreign power, and with an ill-affected Orange Free State on one side, with a vast native population north and south, and in its midst, if Natal is to remain an English colony, it could only be secured by a considerable and costly garrison of English troops. We should not, by abandoning the Transvaal, secure peace or the possibility of civilisation to a single one of the native tribes round either Natal or the Transvaal, nor to the old Cape Colony. What has already occurred in the Transvaal has reopened the divisions which were fast healing up, and threatens to involve the Cape Colony I have unshaken confidence in the moderation, patriotism, and loyalty of the great majority of the Cape colonists, and of those who are governing

them as their responsible ministers; but it is not difficult to plunge a youthful constitution into troubles which would be too much for the strength even of the oldest and most consolidated dominion. No one can contemplate, without a shudder, the idea of civil war between the two principal races which form the European population, and which have, by a combination of diverse great qualities, raised the Colony to its present condition of strength and prosperity. It would be impossible to forecast the future of such communities, but if the English Government were to repudiate its responsibilities in South Africa, I see no better prospect for some generations than the formation of a knot of small antagonistic republics, more or less civilised, but for the most part closely approaching the type of the Republics which have succeeded Spanish dominion in South America.

The first thought of the English Government should be to enforce submission to the law in the province which has rebelled against it, to re-establish a government able to protect person and property, and to defend the order which is indispensable to the existence of a civilised State; and by so doing to redeem the first and most important of the promises made to the people of the Transvaal on its annexation.

This having been done, no time should be lost in amending the constitution of the Transvaal, and making it more conformable to the wants and wishes of the population. This would not be difficult to arrange. I have already referred to the scheme drawn up for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, and embracing the suggestions of some of the leading statesmen and jurists of the Cape Colony, and also of the able president of the Orange Free State. I should look with great confidence to the successful working of any Transvaal constitution which had the approval of Mr. Sprigg and his colleagues, and of Mr. Brand.

On another occasion I hope to indicate in what directions the most important modifications should, in my own opinion, be made, to secure unity of policy in all such important matters as the native question throughout all the English colonies in South Africa, and how, by co-operating with the Portuguese Government, we may set definite bounds to any extension of English responsibilities to the north of the Orange River and Limpopo basins; and so fix geographical limits within which the Anglo-Dutch subjects of the British Crown, and the people of the Orange Free State, shall have scope to grow as self-defending and self-governing dominions.

All I would now say is, let us beware of sending out cut and dried constitutions from England to a people like that of the Transvaal.

Of no people is it more true that their institutions must grow with them, or be adapted to all their peculiarities. The only way in which a good working constitution can be framed for a country in the position of the Transvaal is to give large powers to an experienced administrator on the spot, to draw up such a constitution as will be approved by the best men among the Boers themselves, as well as by the intelligent and experienced statesmen who rule the destinies of similar and kindred communities in the Orange Free State and the Cape Colony.

H. B. E. Frere.